

Speech_Ukraine_L. Vasylenko

Honorable Chair,

Colleagues

Distinguished Members of the Assembly!

I start with extending great thanks to the IPU for creating a special platform for the voice of young parliamentarians.

I represent one of the youngest parliaments of the world where the average age of MPs is 41.

Women make up 20.5% of the Ukrainian Parliament. This may not seem much of an achievement in comparison with some countries, but it is a lot for Ukraine, which doubled the number of women in parliament since the last parliamentary convocation.

I am saying this to emphasize Ukraine's dedication to the common goals agreed upon by all members of the international community.

Of course these are not the only examples where Ukraine has shown deep respect for international law and international commitments.

For example in 1994 Ukraine has given up its nuclear arsenal, - at the time one of the largest in the world, - in return for the promise of collective security enshrined in the Budapest Memorandum.

A promise broken just 20 years later by one of the guardians of the security and sovereignty of Ukraine under that very same memorandum.

In fact, Russia since February 2014 is in continuous breach of the core principles of international law, provisions of the UN Charter and other binding international agreements. Following the annexation of Crimea and the illegal occupation of Eastern Ukraine, Russia controls 7(!)% of the territory of Ukraine, constantly committing crimes of war and violations of human rights.

These audacious violations have been condemned by numerous resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the PACE, the European Parliament and various national parliaments.

But international resolutions mean nothing when the crime of aggression is committed by one of the largest economies in the world, with the largest army and a permanent seat at the UN Security Council.

The lesson Ukraine has learnt over the last five years is that international law can no longer be relied upon as a pathway to an integrated and peaceful world order.

Thus, my appeal to every nation gathered here today is to break away with accepting the practice of breaking the rules.

It is our job as parliamentarians and citizens of the world to make sure all nations stand by a dedicated commitment to respect international law! Regardless country size or amount of nuclear weapons in possession!

I hope we all go home with this in mind.

Thank you for listening